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This Side and That

Kerala Imbroglia

In the turmoil which is developing in Kerala, several currents can be traced, agrarian, industrial, cultural and political. The spate of speeches, declarations, editorials and denunciations which the press airily reports betrays not only the contradictions of the many opponents, but more especially the confusion of information and sentiment among detached observers.

One key-point deserves particular attention : the educational question, and in the educational question, the position of the Catholic community. With Catholics the Education Act is not a mere matter of pedagogical method or of administrative set up ; it is before all else a matter of religion, a vital principle and conviction.

The Catholic hierarchy, clergy and community are bound in conscience to combat an Act that would impose a system of anti-religious education, and the Kerala Education Act means little else besides introducing and enforcing atheistic materialism on children and adolescents. Hence the bounden duty on all Catholics to oppose it root and branch. In all countries down the centuries when similar circumstances arose, the Catholic attitude proved of an

even tenor on the school problem and revealed the same principle and conviction, and the Kerala Catholics are only faithful to a long tradition.

Cultural Autonomy

What is peculiar to the present instance is that the very Constitution of India does explicitly give due sanction to the stand they have taken. Our Constitution does indeed pledge legal protection to the cultural autonomy of minorities, to the free propagation of religion, to educational systems fostering religious and moral development.

Yet, wonder of wonders, little reference is made to cultural autonomy in the press or in public speeches treating of the Kerala controversies; it would appear as if they involved only problems of jobs, or political interests, and as if nationalised text-books or random nomination of educators had no cultural import or could never threaten educational autonomy. Even several in the Congress High Command appear to grow indifferent and to shed their brand of secularism which was to respect all religions. The Christian leaders, who in their trust in the National Congress renounced any communal representation, begin to regret their candid attitude in the days of the Constituent Assembly, though they still look forward to a last minute redress in the Congress policy.

The struggle will be hard and difficult; as occasion arises, the Kerala Chief Minister will start a zig, the Education Minister will follow with a zag, and so the Red Cabinet with the traditional zigzag policy of the Reds will strive for victory. Let no right-minded citizen ever forget that the Reds are not ordinary politicians, but downright philosophers who will pursue their policy to the end unless an equally resolute opposition sweeps them out of power.

Text-Books

Every right-minded citizen should feel grateful to H. E. the Archbishop of Bangalore for having flood-lit the problem with a few quotations from school text-books prescribed in Kerala. Instances run as follows : " Religion is the opium of the people. Religion is a kind of spiritual gin in which the slaves of capitalism drown their human shape and their claims to any decent human life " — " We must act so that each blow aimed at the clergy shall attack religion in general " — Who would expect Catholic schools and colleges to submit to such indoctrination ? Is it not rather surprising that little protest is heard from the religious-minded people all over the country, Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Jains and others ? Possibly such quotations were not publicized in all States. They would suffice to rouse public opinion and provoke resistance to all Communist manoeuvres and pseudo-democratic propaganda, and give short-shrift to all Red claims of respecting our Constitution. Too many editors and readers, have been confused with all manner of agrarian, industrial and economic side-issues mixed up with the Education Act, and lost sight of the main gist of that nefarious piece of legislation. Even several members of the Congress High Command remain blind to the growing menace, and the Union Education Minister appears to be confused on the ministerial responsibilities involved in Art. 30 of the Constitution. They apparently fail to realize that there are people giving priority to spiritual values.

Electoral Rolls

In democracies the ultimate weapon is the citizen's vote. Hence the duty of each and every good citizen to make certain that in all types of elections he will have that weapon at his disposal, and that his name is duly registered in time on the rolls which are prepared and corrected from time to time. Too many good and pious people seem obli-

ous of that elementary civic obligation and well-minded associations appear neglectful of that basic caution.

With the psychological upset attending India's reconstruction, all manners of proposals are put forth in meetings and carried to the legislatures before sensible people have taken occasion to halt the wildest excogitations of groups and individuals. A recent instance of democracy going wild was witnessed at the last meeting of the All-Bengal Teachers' Association where it was mooted to hold examinations at the convenience of the students, each subject being made optional and deserving a diploma, any subject or number of subjects being fixed by the student according to his aptitude, ability, and requirements. The next democratic proposal is likely to be that invigilators and examiners will be dispensed with and that students will walk down any avenue of employment with self-delivery of diplomas. Would not that be the acme of democracy, diplomas of the people, by the people and for the people? Would it not mean the end of indiscipline among students and of grumbling among teachers?

Are such political trends in teachers' associations enough to wake up parents to their responsibilities, and to reassert their rights to choose and direct the type of education they want for their children? In this field more than in any other, eternal vigilance is called for.

Third Plan

As we are nearing the end of the Second Five Year Plan, we are treated to various prognostics about the Third Plan. The Union Minister for Labour and Employment recently threw out the forecast that on the basis of the estimated Rs. 10,000 crores for the Third Plan the number of unemployed would increase from seven to nine million in the interval as the Plan would only provide work for

12 out of the 21 million new entrants of the labour force. This calculation led him to urge employers to devise "un-orthodox ways" of finding jobs right and left.

One could not well expect a Union Minister to suggest a few unorthodox ways of being employed, like selling building plots on the moon, or organising touring parties for air-space travellers, but another ministerial source revealed that quite a few citizens are partly employed in running away from the tax officers. Were we not told that out of the thirty-five millions liable to income-tax, not more than one million obliged those meritorious officials with due payment? Who does not guess the amount of activity that is needed to effect such escape year after year?

More realistic was the Prime Minister when opening the A. I. C. C. Seminar on planning at Ootacamund. He focussed public attention on the basic idea that the Third Plan must be taken in hand with a sense of urgency and compulsion. "Otherwise India simply runs the risk of sinking in midstream". What are our needs and what are our resources are the basic estimates, and among the available resources the training of the human beings who are to implement the various projects at all their stages is the most fundamental; targets will have to be fixed year after year and achieved with ceaseless energy and the main target remains self-sufficiency in foodstuffs. Those who are acquainted with the slow speed with which any peasantry takes to new methods of cultivation and new styles of cultivation keep their fingers crossed when hearing fiery exhortations about joint farming or even about service cooperatives. What is worse is that the cooperative campaign shows little response among the youths of the country. Did not the very Congress President recently regret that instead of the hundreds of youths required, only a handful of volunteers could be mustered to develop the cooperative

movement in the countryside ? Should we not be forced into some measure of conscription of our youth to carry out the famous Nagpur resolution on agricultural cooperation ?

Even more realistic was a former Finance Minister, Mr. C. D. Deshmukh, when on his own he proposed drastic cuts in consumption on the widest scale possible, and aimed at taxing the vast majority of all citizens whose income is below Rs. 3,000. The Plans could not be fed from extra taxation on capitalists and zamindars, and called for nourishment from the general population. His suggestion that a Coalition Ministry would act as a magic wand and rally popular support for austerity measures is hardly workable, since a coalition would only increase the vacillations which are already noticeable in the general policy. As to the hope of rousing the population to cut their meagre consumption in the present for the sake of future prosperity, no magic wand can work such a wonder in democracies.

What would be required would be to create a sense of national emergency and rouse the idealism of youth. Can this be done when the sense of spiritual values is toned down and even drowned in endless talks about materialist comfort and mundane economics ?

A. L.

Kerala's "Hungry People and Empty Lands"

Of late, the food problem of Kerala has attracted considerable public attention throughout the country, and hence an impartial assessment of the situation has become increasingly necessary to present to the public the true picture of the real state of affairs. Kerala has a population of 135.49 lakhs against an area of nearly 15,000 sq. miles, distributed over the various districts as follows :-

District	Area (sq. miles)	Population
Alleppey	705	14,75,772
Cannanore	2,096	15,60,119
Kottayam	2,595	17,56,623
Kozhikode	2,349	20,36,779
Palghat	1,840	15,94,393
Quilon	1,995	15,22,592
Trichur	1,683	22,12,383
Trivandrum	716	13,56,249
Total	14,937	1,35,49,118

Food Production

The heavy pressure of population on land (density of population is 1015 per sq. mile) has more than manifested itself in the chronically deficit food situation of the State. The land utilization statistics of the State are, to some extent, self explanatory :-

	Area in acres	Percentage
Total area	94,12,067	.. —
Forests	24,32,644	.. 25.8
Land utilised for purposes other than agriculture	4,70,757	.. 5.0
Waste land	20,31,788	.. 21.6
Land under cultivation	44,76,877	.. 47.6

Of the total area under cultivation nearly 20 lakhs of acres are under paddy, 6 lakhs of acres under tapioca and nearly 1.5 lakh acres under other food crops. The annual production at present is as under :-

Rice	8,92,000	tons
Tapioca	15,69,000	tons
Other food crops	32,000	tons

The average yield of rice in the State is about 1000 lbs. per acre in the single-crop areas and much less in the double-crop areas. Mixed cropping is practised on an estimated 3 per cent of the cultivated area and mixed-farming in nearly 5 per cent of the villages. Cultivation is hardly scientific when it is badly needed to be so. The use of tractors is negligible and cultivation is commonly done by the traditional wooden plough and bullocks. The method of manuring is primitive and chemical fertilizers are not regularly supplied nor their wide-spread use popularised. In so many villages pest control is unknown and the incidence of pests like *chazhi* and locusts is not rare. All these causes contribute to the backwardness of agriculture in the State and consequently the crop yield per acre as well as per man is far lower than that of other agricultural States like the Punjab and Madras.

The Deficit

It is estimated that the available supply of rice in Kerala is 6.5 ounces per head. If an average individual requires 16 ounces* of rice per day, since it is the staple food of the people of the State, the deficit will be of the order of 12 lakh tons. Further more, a 15 lakh increase in population is expected by the end of Second Five Year

* But 19 ounces of food per head per day has been deemed necessary by nutrition experts like Dr. Aykroyd and an over-all per capita increase in daily consumption by one ounce would require an additional supply of 3 lakh tons for the State.

Plan which would require an additional 2 lakh tons of rice at the rate of 16 ounces per head per day. According to the claim of the present government, the state is 50 per cent deficit in normal times; but the fact that self-sufficiency is rather difficult to achieve in the immediate future does not warrant any complacent attitude on the part of the State. The government cannot afford to bite their lips and sit quiet pitying their own inability to save the State from the present food crisis.

Development Schemes

The authors of the Thirty-Year Master Plan claim that Kerala will be self-sufficient within the next thirty years by augmenting the present cropping pattern to an average of two-and-a-half crops annually on the 19.5 lakh acres available for paddy cultivation. During the first plan period, the food production in Kerala is estimated to have increased by 3,45,764 tons. This was achieved after spending 19 per cent of the total plan outlay of Rs. 30 crores on agriculture and commodity development programmes.

In the 87 crore Second Plan for the State, the target of additional food production is 3.49 lakh tons. The amount ear-marked for agricultural development alone is Rs. 15 crores. The expenditure under the State plan for the first three years would be about Rs. 40 crores. Central assistance for this period totals to Rs. 17.5 crores. During the year 1957—58, the target of additional food production for the five year period has been reduced from 3.49 lakh tons to 2.76 lakh tons. Of this, 0.25 lakh tons were produced in the first year while the corresponding figure for 1957—58 is 0.09 lakh tons. The total additional area brought under actual irrigation through medium and major irrigation schemes during 1956—57 was nearly 45,000 acres. Under minor irrigation schemes, the five year target was to bring 2.9 lakh additional acres under irrigation, whereas the

achievement is merely 20,000 acres in 1956-57 and nearly the same area in 1957-58. The main irrigation project in Kerala, included in the Second Five Year Plan is Boothathankettu with a total capital outlay of Rs. 348 lakhs out of which the plan allotment is Rs. 305 lakhs. On completion this project is expected to irrigate 63,000 acres while during the plan period the extent of irrigation will be over 25,000 acres. But at present the area irrigated is negligible. The important development projects completed during the plan are as under :-

<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Year of completion.</i>	<i>Total Capital outlay (Rs. lakhs)</i>	<i>Area irrigated (1000 acres).</i>
Kuttanad	1956	60	121 (Relief from submersion)
Peechi	1957	235	46
Neyyar	1958	146	15
Malampuzha	1958	528	48
Malayar Reservoir	1957-58	100	84

The important hydro-electric project in the State is Perongalkuthu with a total capital outlay of Rs. 346 lakhs out of which the Plan allots Rs. 75 lakhs. The generation of power by this project will be of the order of 32,000 K. W. The Sengulam hydel project has already been completed with an installed capacity of 48,000 K. W., but the present power generation is none-too-encouraging. The Second Plan target of additional installed capacity is 87,000 K. W.

Development Outlay

The budget estimates show that the State has spent Rs. 160.70 lakhs (Rs. 153.19 lakhs in the revised estimates) on agriculture and rural development during 1957-58 and a proposed outlay of Rs. 195.08 lakhs during 1958-59. But the Budget expenditures made no substantial difference in

the food situation of the State. Again, the present administrative machinery has failed miserably in utilizing the Plan allocations granted to the State. For the first three years the spending of the Plan allotment for agriculture by the State's department is of the order of 8.16, 9.68 and 16.23 per cent. At this rate, the prospects of fulfilling the Plan targets are clouded with pessimism. In addition to the Plan allocations, the State receives from the centre Rs. 375 lakhs as share in taxes and Rs. 175 lakhs as grants under Article 275(1).

In the Plan structure, provisions have been made for giving assistance to the agriculturists in the form of subsidies and loans and better seeds, fertilizers, improved implements, insecticides, etc. at concession rates; but the cultivating community cannot be said to have received any. The frequent interferences of the political functionaries with the economic life of the State have proved to be a hindrance of considerable magnitude to the progress of agricultural development. To illustrate, the *Karshaka-sangam*, an organisation of agricultural labour based on political ideologies, interferes with the cultivation of the State on matters like wages, working hours, etc., with the tacit approval of the administration. This danger is largely born out of the identification of the Party with the government of the State.

Present Situation

There are 26.70 lakhs of agricultural holdings in Kerala, out of which 14.84 lakhs, i.e. 55.6 per cent, of holdings are of less than one acre each. The average income from an acre of paddy field is estimated to be Rs. 200 per annum. So that, holdings less than 15 acres in extent cannot be considered as economic holdings. Hence, more than 60 per cent of the holdings are submarginal. But, since 84 per cent of the population is classed as rural, and since indus-

trialisation is at a slow pace and is limited in scope, agricultural development is the only way to more employment and self-sufficiency.

Out of the rural population, 39.5 per cent are included in the class of agricultural labour — 20.8 per cent with land and 18.7 per cent without land. Under these circumstances agriculture has to be made more scientific and intensive with rotation of crops, mixed-farming, double-cropping, etc. so as to increase the human carrying capacity of the soil. But during the last two years, instances of switching back to single-cropping from double-cropping were in no way uncommon mainly because of labour troubles induced by vested political interests. This sad state of affairs considerably affected the economic development of the State and acts as a formidable deterrent to augmenting the State's food production.

With the formation of the Southern Food Zone, the Central Government had reduced the monthly quota of rice to Kerala from 25,000 tons to 10,000 tons and later stopped completely. Subsequently, the present government opened fair price shops at the rate of one per 500 families and supplied rice at the rate of one *edangazhi* for one family for a week. But the prices sky-rocketed and to get over the tight situation, the Central Government supplied 196,000 tons of rice from Andhra during December, 1958.

The general deterioration of the economy reflected on the financial side also. The State exchequer showed a surplus of Rs. 122 lakhs in April, 1957, but since then, the management of the State's finances was far from satisfactory and the Government had taken an over-draft of Rs. 467.23 lakhs from the Reserve Bank of India in the ways and means account by the end of November, 1958. This figure exceeds the limit sanctioned to Kerala State.

Because of the reckless waste of public funds on grandiose edifices and the consequent state of near-bankruptcy, the State was not able to spend any substantial amount on food subsidy. Out of the Rs. 1 crore provided in the 1958-59 budget for food subsidy, only Rs. 25 lakhs had been spent so far despite the serious food situation. As a result there has been a fifty per cent increase in the price of rice within the last six months, the latest being 75 to 81 n.P. for an *edangazhi* of rice. The cost of living has been increased at least by 25 per cent during the last three months, the consumer price index at two important centres being as follows:-

Year	Consumer price index (1949 = 100)	
	Ernakulam	Trichur
1953 ..	107	107
1954 ..	107	107
1955 ..	107	106
1956 ..	111	113
1957 ..	114	117
1958 ..	116	120

A comparison of productivity and real earnings in Kerala shows that there is a slight decline in the last two years while the same displayed an upward trend in the other States of India.

Year	Productivity Real Earnings (1939 = 100)	
1951 ..	88.7	92.2
1952 ..	97.4	101.8
1953 ..	105.8	99.9
1954 ..	113.0	102.7
1955 ..	114.5	103.2
1956 ..	114.8	103.5
1957 ..	114.5	103.1
1958 ..	113.6	102.8

The productivity in agriculture can be increased by augmenting the yield per acre as well as per man. A study of the present agricultural productivity in the State reveals certain disappointing facts; for illustration, a comparison of productivity in major crops in the State is made between 1950-'51 and 1957-'58 :-

	1950-'51		1957-'58
Paddy ..	1020 ryot hours per ton		1210 ryot hours per ton
Tapioca ..	486 - do -		618 - do -

If we attempt a regional comparison, the ryot-hours required to produce a ton of paddy in Madras State is 918.5 in 1957-58 whereas it was 1087.2 in 1940-41. In Madras, the agricultural productivity registered a continuous increase whereas in Kerala it was on a steady decline, especially during the last two years.

In areas, where productivity is comparatively low, cultivation suffers more from the misuse of available resources than from a lack of facilities. The soils in Kerala mainly belong to the red and black varieties, but along the coast, loams and sandy soils are also found. The many rivulets in the State deposit considerable amount of alluvium in their deltas every year and the deltaic areas are known for rice cultivation. On the whole, the soils in Kerala are good in their fertility, and the rainfall in the State (normally above 120") is assured and adequate. Under these circumstances, the cause for the decline in agricultural productivity in the State is to be sought elsewhere. If we ask: "is the under-utilization of available resources in Kerala born out of lack of incentives?", the answer is certainly an emphatic affirmative.

A Way Out

The accepted agronomic methods for greater agricultural yield are scientific cultivation with better seeds, judicious manuring, timely and adequate irrigation, flood-

and pest-control, mixed-farming, rotation of crops, prevention of soil erosion, etc. The cultivation of leguminous crops as a catch-crop in between the principal food crops, will go a long way to solve the problem of nitrogenous manures in the State.

Furthermore, the area under cultivation must be extended *pari passu* with increasing the intensity of land utilization. Out of the 20.32 lakhs of acres of waste lands in the State, nearly 8 lakh acres can be readily reclaimed with the use of light and heavy machinery. The outlay on this will be of the order of Rs. 20 crores at an estimated rate of Rs. 250 per acre and will take a reasonable period of four years. The production of rice from this area will amount to 3.5 lakh tons at the present average yield in the State. Nearly 10,000 tons of rice can be produced by increasing the yield of nearly three lakh acres through drainage and reclamation, and through minor irrigation works such as digging wells, constructing canals and erecting bunds for lift irrigation purposes. But under the present political environment, with the foremost emphasis on the Party rather than on the well-being of the people, the realisation of these bold plans cannot be thought of.

The recent Agrarian Relations Bill introduced into the Kerala Assembly will not in any way help to get over the critical food situation in the State. Instead, it will kill initiative and make the already difficult problem of Sub-division and fragmentation worse. At a time when heroic efforts are needed on the part of the Government to solve the food crisis, the Government has spent only Rs. 4.21 crores out of the Plan outlay of Rs. 17.9 crores for the year ended March 31, 1959. The recent ridiculous rice deal of the Government with Andhra is another all-too-plain example of the lethargic attitude adopted by the Government of the State towards the economic emancipation of its people.

Francis V. Thadikaran

The Working of the Minimum Wage Act, 1948

The State and Economic Life

Whatever may be the merits and defects of laissez faire economics it is no exaggeration to say that the majority of underdeveloped countries have refused to accept, at least in theory, its principles and practice. Economic planning, the concept of the Welfare State, Socialism, and Five Year plans have caught the imagination of both political leaders and large sections of the public in many an underdeveloped country.

Even a superficial knowledge of economic history reveals the fact that State intervention in the economic life of the country, for the most part, has been due to the attempt to remedy the evils of an economic system built on the principles and practice of liberalism. Karl Marx was right when he pointed out that the progress of liberal economics tended to divide peoples into two camps; but what he failed to see was that to foster and encourage this division by means of the class-struggle could not lead to industrial peace or progress. He never imagined that the workers, themselves, would not sit by passively, and allow their conditions to grow worse, but would, by means of State legislation, seek to improve their lot. He failed completely to see that Capitalism, itself, would evolve a new pattern so that its worst aspects and anti-social effects would tend to disappear.

In our underdeveloped countries, the intervention of the State in the economic life of the country has been inspired partly by historical causes, and partly by the simple fact that rapid economic and industrial development are quite beyond the resources and ability of private enterprise.

in such countries. Few, if any of these underdeveloped countries possess the cultural background, the capital and technical know-how to meet the demands of rapid industrialization. In these circumstances, given the aim of industrialisation, it has become the obligation of the governments of these countries to marshal all the resources of the country and so exercise a more direct control of the economic life of the nation.¹

The State and wages

Despite the advance of science and technology, manpower has always been, and is still, considered one of the most important factors of economic growth, and therefore, it is not surprising that State intervention in the economic life of the country should attempt to deal with employment and wages. The history of State legislation on wages goes back to the time when it was realized that the effective protection of workers could not be left to the blind forces of economics, nor to the mercy and good will of employers and owners. The distress among the working classes caused, for the most part, by the principles and spirit of economic liberalism made it imperative, even in industrially advanced countries, for the State to interfere. Indeed, as the guardian of the common welfare, the State is under a serious obligation to protect all its citizens, and as Pope Leo XIII insists, "the poor and the badly off have a claim to especial consideration".²

This does not mean, however, that Pope Leo XIII and Catholic social teaching advocate State control of the economic life of the country, but that the State may not allow any economic system so to operate that the rights of any sections of its citizens are denied. So also, while Catholic social teaching stoutly defends the right of private owner-

¹ See Report on the Avadi Session of Congress, 1954.

² The Workers' Charter, section, 29.

ship, it insists that the State should control, limit and regulate the exercise of this right whenever vested interests and ownership tend to harm the common well being.³

In the case of wages, whenever labour is unorganised, or the individual and collective bargaining power of the workers are so weak that they are easily exploited, then there is a case for the State to take all legitimate means so that all workers may secure a just wage. There is no need to go into the history of the working-classes in most underdeveloped countries to show that the greater number of workers are, for the most part, unorganized and enjoy hardly any bargaining power. While the problems of "sweated labour" and unfair competition have, to a large extent been solved in many industrially advanced countries, they are still met with in our newly industrialized and underdeveloped countries. Obviously, and until such time that labour can protect its own interests there is need for some kind of legal protection of the working-classes, especially in the sphere of wages.

The Minimum Wage Concept

Before examining the Minimum Wage legislation as it operates in India, it will be helpful to have as clear an idea as possible as to the meaning of a minimum wage. The task is not easy. Because wages play so important a role in the social and economic life of society, various theories of wages have been put forward by economists, while in the field of practice, wages have bedevilled the social policy of most countries. From this has sprung various theories of wages, suited to the economic development of various countries, and indeed, different concepts of wages, such as, the Basic Wage, the Fair Wage, the Living Wage, the Family Wage and the Minimum Wage. While

³ Pius XI, *The Social Order*, section, 49.

there is no need to go into all these theories, and even examine the many definitions, it may be remarked that many of these definitions are not very helpful as they leave most important issues too vague. Thus, in many definitions it is not clear what is meant by "an average employee".⁴ or "the normal and reasonable needs of the worker".⁵ or, "a fair and reasonable standard of comfort".⁶

The Minimum Wage Fixing Machinery published by the International Labour Organisation has summarized these and other views as follows :-

"In different countries estimates have been made of the amount of the living wage, but estimates vary according to the point of view of the investigator. Estimates may be classified into at least three groups: (1) the amount necessary for subsistence, (2) the amount necessary for health and decency, (3) the amount necessary to provide a standard of comfort." It would appear, therefore, that there is a general agreement that the minimum wage, should enable the wage-earner to provide for himself and his family not merely the bare essentials of food, clothing and shelter, but also a measure of frugal comfort including the necessary education of the children, protection against ill-health requirements of essential social needs and a measure of insurance against the more important misfortunes, including old age.

According to the Committee on Fair Wages, 1949, "a minimum wage must provide not merely for the bare sustenance of life, but for the preservation of the efficiency of the worker. For this purpose, the minimum wage must

⁴ South Australian Industrial Act, 1912.

⁵ New Zealand, Industrial Conciliation & Arbitration Act. 1936.

⁶ Some Papers on Wage Policy, Govt. of India, Ministry of Labour, 1957.

also provide for some measure of education, medical requirements and amenities". Commenting on this view, the Supreme Court in its judgement on the Wage Boards of the Working Journalists, 1958, says: "There is a distinction between a bare subsistence or minimum wage and a statutory minimum wage. The former is a wage which would be sufficient to cover the bare physical needs of a worker and his family, that is, a rate which has got to be paid to the worker irrespective of the capacity of the industry to pay. If an industry is unable to pay its workmen at least a bare minimum wage, it has no right to exist, as was observed by us in Civil Appeal No. 235, Crown Aluminium Works Vs. Their Workmen."

Some early efforts towards the regulation of wages

Before the passing of the Minimum Wage Act, 1948, the State had little to do with the enforcement of any wage-regulation in the country. However various recommendations were made from time to time by legislative bodies and other organisations. Thus, as early as 1921, a resolution in the Bengal Legislative Council recommended that "early steps be taken to establish industrial boards for the determination of a minimum wage for each industry in Bengal". In 1928 the International Labour Conference adopted the convention for minimum wage fixing machinery, and when the question of the ratification of the convention arose, the Government of India stated that, "it could neither enter into any commitment nor give any indication of possible ratification until a thorough enquiry had been held in the practicability of establishing wage boards in India." The Royal Commission on Labour, 1929, commenting on the I. L. O. convention said that in India organized industry could not be allowed to lower the standard of those it employed, and that before the convention could be adopted, "it would first be necessary to create machinery for fixing minimum rates of wages in those trades in which wages

are lowest and where there is no question of collective bargaining."

The Government of India Act, 1935, empowered State Governments to set up machinery for determining minimum wages. However, no action was taken by any State Government. In the following year the Payment of Wages Act was passed, but while it regulates the payment of wages, it does not deal with the fixation of wages. In 1937, Labour Enquiry Committees were set up in the then provinces of Bombay, Bihar, Central Provinces and the United Provinces. While these committees did useful work, no action was taken on their findings.

The Minimum Wage Act, 1948

The main characteristics or provisions of the Act are as follows :—

1. The Act is permissive and gives the State Governments power with respect to certain types of employment mentioned in Parts I and II of the Schedule, to fix, within a specified period, minimum wage rates for all those employed in these occupations.
2. The scope of the Act is very wide. It covers all types of workers, "employed for hire or reward", for any kind of employment, "to do any work, skilled or unskilled, manual or clerical in a scheduled employment", in any place "and includes an out-worker to whom any article or materials are given out by another person to be made up, cleaned, washed, altered, ornamented, finished, repaired, adapted or otherwise processed for sale for the purpose of trade or business of that person, where the process is to be carried out either in the home of the out-worker or some other premise not being premises under the control and management of that other person and also includes an employee declared to be an employee by the appropriate Government".

3. The minimum rate of wages may consist of, either a basic wage rate to be adjusted according to time and manner directed by the Government concerned, or, a basic wage rate with or without the cost of living allowance, or, an all-inclusive rate allowing for the basic rate, the cost of living allowance and the cash value of the concessions, if any.

4. The wage fixing machinery may be, either a committee with sub-committees appointed by the State Government, or the Government may publish its proposals in the official gazette, and after receiving representations from the persons concerned, the Government may fix rates for the scheduled employment.

5. The Act also empowers State Governments concerned to revise the minimum rates of wages (section, 6) ; to authorize the payment of minimum wages either wholly or partly in kind (section, 11) ; to "appoint such persons as it thinks fit to be Inspectors for the purposes of this Act (section, 19), and to add to the list of employments mentioned in Part I and II of the Schedule (section, 27).

Fixing the Minimum Wage

If the concept of the minimum wage is involved in a number of difficulties, the attempt to fix the minimum wage is no less easy. The difference of social attitudes among even the same group of workers, the different patterns of life and the varying cost of living in rural and urban areas, and often even in the same industrial centre make it most difficult to arrive at a wage-structure which can satisfy the common demands of workers and employers.

In any attempt to overcome this difficulty, the Minimum Wage Act, 1948, provides for the establishment of Advisory Committees and Boards composed of representatives from the ranks of employers and workers and

independent persons for the purpose of holding enquires and advising the Governments in the matter of fixing or revising rates of minimum wages. The following Table I gives details of such committees set up during the year, 1956.⁷

<i>States</i>	<i>Number of Committees or Boards set up.</i>	<i>Occupations covered.</i>
Bombay	4	Stone breaking and crushing. Local authority. Cotton ginning and pressing.
Bihar	4	Lac and Mica works. Tea plantations. Agriculture.
Delhi	4	Local authority. Dal and flour mills. Stone breaking and crushing. Road and building works.
Madras	4	Tannery and leather industries. Public Motor transport. Local authority. Plantations.
Madhya Bharat	2	Tobacco and bidi manufactures.
Orissa	4	Rice, dal and flour mills. Tobacco and bidi manufactures. Road and building works. Agriculture.
Punjab	3	Foundries. Private Presses. Tea Plantations.
Saurashtra	1	Cotton ginning and pressing.

Determining the quantum of the minimum wage

While these Committees and Boards are officially appointed to help fix the minimum wage of different categories of workers, it may happen that other organisations, like the Labour Tribunals set up under the Industrial Dis-

⁷ Indian Labour Gazette. January, 1958, p. 659.

putes Act, 1947, may function for the same purpose. Thus, in the Buckingham and Carnatic Mills Case, 1951, the principles of minimum wage determination were first discussed. "In determining the actual quantum of minimum wages, the Tribunal was guided by the standard recommended by different authorities in the matter of food, clothing, housing, fuel, light and miscellaneous items and the findings of the family budget enquiries in the locality regarding the percentage allocation of expenditure on these items. The minimum wage was worked out on the basis of a family of 3 consumption units, a figure which has not always been uniformly adhered to. The quantum of minimum wage in a particular locality is generally worked out by the tribunals on the basis of independent data and along the above lines. Where such data are not available, the minimum prevailing in the same or similar industry and in the same or neighbouring locality is considered".⁸

The extension of the Act

One of the main criticisms launched against the Act when it was passed, was that it was too narrow, in that certain types of employment were excluded in the Schedule. If, as some argued the aim and object of the Act was to get rid of "sweated labour" and unduly low wages, then, the list of employment in Part I of the Schedule was too narrow, and it became imperative to include or add other industries in which labour was being exploited. However, section 27 of the Act empowers State Governments to add to the list of employments, and so bring under the Act other industries than those listed in Part I of the Schedule. This has been done in many States, and in the actual working of the Minimum Wage Act, there is a progressive movement bringing under the Act many types of employment in which wages are all too low. Table II below gives the

⁸ Some papers on Wage policy. Govt. of India. Ministry of Labour,

various industries which have been brought under the Act, during the period from 1956 to 1958.

Table II. Employments added to Part I of Schedule during 1956-58.⁹

<i>State</i>	<i>Types of Employment.</i>
Ajmer	.. Cotton textiles.
Assam	.. Tea plantations (plucking)
Bihar	.. Agriculture (Darbhanga dist.)
Bombay	.. Cotton ginning and pressing. Letter press printing. Lithography & photo-gravure. Tobacco and bidi making.
Delhi	.. Dal and Flour mills.
Kerala	.. Rubber plantations (women tap- Bidi making (Malabar dist.) pers) Cardamom plantations. Tile industry (Quilon & Feroke Coir manufacture. areas) Agriculture (Malabar dist.)
Madhya Pradesh	.. Cotton ginning and pressing. Oil mills. Public Motor Transport. Cement. Rice, Dal and Flour mills. Local authority. Lac manufacture. Stone breaking and crushing. Tobacco and bidi making.
Madras	.. Tanneries and leather manufacture.
Punjab	.. Agricultural implements. Machine tools & general engineer- Cycle industry. ing. Tea plantations.
Rajasthan	.. Transport. Woollen carpet and shawl weaving. Tobacco and bidi manufacture.

⁹ Indian Labour Gazette, January, March, October, 1958.

Difficulties in enforcing the Act

Section 19 of the Minimum Wages Act, 1948, empowers the appropriate Governments to appoint Inspectors for the enforcement of the Act, in practice, however, the effective enforcement of this legislative measure depends, by and large, on the availability of an adequate inspection staff and the co-operation of employers. The most common irregularities detected concern the non-maintenance of registers and records, the payment of wages at rates less than those prescribed, the disregard of rules concerning the display of notices, the issue of wage-slips and attendance cards and regulations concerning the weekly off-day, the non-payment or under-payment of over-time wages and irregular working hours. In most cases breaches of the Act are rectified on the spot, and irregularities pointed out to employers who are asked to take suitable action immediately. Thus, although the number of irregularities are fairly large, the recourse to penal action is relatively rare. In the Bombay State, during the first quarter of 1958, while the number of inspections made was 2,658, and the number of irregularities detected was 1,067, penal action was taken in only 25 cases.¹⁰

When it is remembered that many employees who come under this Act work in various small scale industries managed by illiterate petty-employers who cannot afford to keep any clerk for the purpose of maintaining registers and records, that road workers often are employed in areas difficult of access to Inspectors, that the workers themselves are often quite ignorant of the provisions of this Act, some idea may be gained as to the extreme difficulty in enforcing the Act. Moreover, the very nature of some trades renders it easy for the unscrupulous employer to evade the provisions of the Act. Thus, in the building trade many con-

¹⁰ Indian Labour Gazette, March 1958, p. 369.

tractors get the work done through sub-contractors, and while the latter do not keep to wage-regulations, the former deny all responsibility for the default. Again, even registers and records cannot always be trusted, as it has been found that while the registers maintained by some employers at certain places showed payment at prescribed rates, the workers in practice had been paid less !¹¹

In conclusion it may be remarked that any kind of legislation aimed at bringing about social reform remains inevitably weak and defective. There are always ways and means at the disposal of anti-social elements to evade the law. In the case of wages, it is a common place, that unless employers are imbued with a spirit which rises above mere self-interest, no legislation can help to bring in an era of wage justice.

C. C. Clump

¹¹ Ibid, p. 871, 872.

NOTICE

Copies of "INDIA GOING RED?" by Fr. A. Nevett, S.J.,
are available at the Indian Social Institute, 13 Boat
Club Road, Poona. 1. Price Rs. 1/25 plus postage

Family Planning

The Sixth International Conference on Planned Parenthood, held in Delhi, last February, came out with some statements which one has come to expect from such meetings, but which, one hopes, their sponsors do not realise just what they imply. Mr. Nehru, giving the Conference his blessing, Mr. D. P. Karmarkar, Health Minister and Mr. S. N. Agarwala have suggested that the best way of spreading birth control and of making it better known is by getting young girls interested in the subject, and, apparently, the younger the better according to Mr. Agarwala, since he thinks that fifteen years would be a suitable age.

The Union Health Minister stated that the Government would have to provide family planning facilities in almost all places where medical and public health services exist; he said facilities for surgical operations were likely to be provided in all medical institutions (this would seem to imply facilities for sterilisation and abortion). He went on to say that the Central Family Planning Board would consider the introduction of sex education at various stages in schools and universities, the gradual integration of the family planning service into the medical and health services of the country.

Dr. S. Chandrasekhar, Director of the Institute of Population Studies, Madras, told the Conference that experience gained at the Kaufman Family Planning Clinic, Chingleput Dt., showed that over fifty per cent of the people contacted favoured family planning through the use of contraceptives. He suggested that owing to socio-economic and cultural conditions in the villages, the easier method of birth control would be either vasectomy (male sterilisation) or salpingectomy (female sterilisation). He said that, of the two, vasectomy should be given the widest

publicity. He added that the Madras Government was embarking on a scheme of promoting and popularizing vasectomy under certain conditions.

The Madras scheme has been drawn up by Mr. R. A. Gopalaswami (formerly Census Commissioner) who, in his Census Report, of all places! advocated *coitus interruptus* and stigmatized as being guilty of the crime of "improvident maternity" all mothers who have more than three children, has now come out with a programme of sterilisation for Rs. 10 and has made it free in two Madras clinics. The same innovator has put a ceiling on India's population at 600 millions and of the world at 4,000 millions.

The national press commented favourably on the Conference and if it had any criticism to add, it was that not enough was being done and that the Government was too niggardly in its grants for the spread of family planning. The *Times of India*, for instance, demanded more vigorous efforts on the part of Government and complained that the Rs. 5 crores set aside in 2nd Five Year Plan was not enough and that the target of 2,300 birth control clinics was inadequate. Both during the Conference and in the national press, the efforts of Japan to reduce its population growth were praised and held up as an example.

It is only too evident that family planning is gaining ground in the country. It has very strong support among the educated classes and is beginning to get a hold among other classes too. There does not seem to be any serious reason for doubting that it will spread in almost the same manner as it has done in other countries.

While the moral argument is the strongest condemnation of contraceptive practices, it has not a great appeal to non-Catholics, who usually consider the argument as good

for Catholics only. But arguments from effects should, and usually do, have greater influence. In reference to some of the suggestions made at the Family Planning Conference, it can be asked how many parents want their young daughters to become propagandists for family planning and to receive sex instruction at school and college? Since Japan has been cited as an example, how many in this country know of the deplorable effects brought about by widespread family planning propaganda to reduce population growth?

Contraceptives fail, the child is unwanted — otherwise contraceptives would not have been used — and recourse is had to abortion. Tatsuo Honda and Yoshio Koya, two Japanese experts have shown how abortion is six times more common among contraceptors than among non-contraceptors. Since the Japanese law allows abortion for medical, economic and social reasons, there has been an enormous increase in the number of abortions: by 1953, the total number of reported induced abortions was 1,068,066; it is estimated that, with unreported cases, the total is close to two millions — more than the number of live births!

Though there are also other factors involved, widespread family planning, and this of the most crude and open type, has undoubtedly been one of the main causes in the decline of morality, especially among youth. All countries where birth control is widely practised report such a decline, marked, especially, by an increase in premarital intercourse. Y. Koya, though favouring family planning, is forced to admit that in Japan "it will be impossible for public morals to become worse than they are today."

In the purely demographic sphere there are also a number of statements which are accepted, out of ignorance,

and made to seem as a valid argument for family planning. For instance: "a high birth rate means a high death rate" is nonsense. America has as high a birth rate as India; French Canada has a higher birth rate, and both countries have a much lower death rate than India.

It is probably along these lines that effective arguments are to be found to stem the growing tide of family planning propaganda.

A. Nevett

POST-GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN SOCIAL SERVICE

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL ORDER

The following notification has been received from the Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India, New Delhi.

"In pursuance of sub-rule (2) of Rule 5 of the Labour Officers (Central Pool) Recruitment and Conditions of Service Rules, 1951, the Government of India hereby recognise the institution mentioned in column (1) below in respect of the diploma in Social Work mentioned in column (2) for the purpose of the said sub-rule."

(1)	(2)
Indian Institute of Social Order, Poona.	Post-Graduate Diploma in Social Service, conferred at Loyola College, Madras & St. Xavier's College, Ranchi.

The Church and National Cultures

One of the characteristics of the late Pope Pius XII in his approach to the different cultures of the world, a characteristic that distinguished him from his predecessors, was his sincere respect and sympathetic understanding of the social and cultural heritages of the different nations of the world.

Here are some extracts from the addresses and writings of Pope Pius XII which illustrate this approach abundantly.

The Different Nations Complete one Another

Through this 'universality of culture' one should aim at promoting not so much the sharing in common of the special features and cultural traits of every nationality, however useful this might be, as the collaboration of their different dispositions and capacities. The differing temperaments, the characters, the traditions, even the climate, infuse, so to say, and foster these dispositions typical of every nation. Applied in understanding collaboration towards a common goal, they complete one another and thus lead to a perfect achievement. This collaboration is in fact, in the intellectual field, what the division and distribution of labour according to the differing competences is in the field of industry and economics. A minimum of general culture proportioned to personal conditions is of course necessary for each and all, but besides that there are fields of human endeavour in which a given nation will excel through its erudite researches of any given source material, another through the analysis and synthesis of the matter thus classified, a third through the elaboration of these source materials and a fourth in the presentation and the putting to use of the materials thus provided.

It is in this way that the different peoples, instead of competing with one another, will find satisfaction in completing one another, each contributing his riches, each drawing profit from the riches of others.

You have fortunately understood, Gentlemen, how sterile or rather disastrous, are the utopian efforts of those who pretend to

establish unity by levelling down everything from below. You on the contrary, you aim at achieving this desired unity by working from the top, by helping each nation and people to raise itself with its own characteristics, its own material and spiritual resources. And you have not forgotten but will declare it quite loudly and with pride, that this unity will only attain its perfection, to the measure that it finds its self-fulfilment in God himself, in a love enlightened by science, in accordance with the teachings of the only true Gospel, and under the guidance of the one and holy Church.

(Address to the International Committee for the Unity and Universality of culture, 14/11/1951)

If we broaden Our perspective, We notice that an analogous task confronts the great family of the Universities, heir of mankind's cultural patrimony. In order to keep themselves free from harmful narrowness, it is necessary to multiply the contacts between teachers and students of the various countries, to develop, by the study of languages and by useful collaboration, the appreciation of the intellectual riches proper to them. It is thus that people, far from becoming involved in competition and opposition to one another, will rather delight in supplying mutual defects.

(Message to the 22nd International Congress of Pax Romana, 12/8/1952, *Catholic Documents*, XI, p. 2)

The Church adorns Herself with the Diversity of Cultures

We wish first of all to express to you Our warm regard for the whole Chinese people which, from the most remote times, has been eminent among the peoples of Asia for its achievements, its literature and for the splendour of its civilization, and which, once it had seen the light of the Gospel that so greatly outshines the wisdom of this world, drew from it those fine qualities of soul, namely the Christian virtues which perfect and strengthen the natural virtues. As you well know, the Catholic religion, far from being opposed to true doctrine or to those institutions of public or private life that are founded on justice, freedom, and charity, on the contrary, furthers, sustains and perfects them. It does not despise or reject the characteristic genius of various peoples, their particular customs, or art, or civilization, but, instead, readily accepts them and, one may say, gladly welcomes them as a new and varied adornment of its own culture.

(Apostolic Letter to the Bishops and Faithful of China, 18/1/1952, *Catholic Documents*, VII, p. 17)

The Church belongs to The East as well as to The West

Secondly, it is hardly necessary for Us to remind you, that the Catholic Church demands of no one to give up his native ways and customs, forces no one to adopt foreign ways of living. The Church belongs to the East as well as to the West. She is bound to no particular culture, she is at home with all who respect the commands of God. What is consonant with man's God-given nature, is good and simply human, the Church permits, furthers, ennobles and sanctifies. This once made clear, beloved sons and daughters, it is for you to be conscious of your duty to your country and people.

Be an army of prayers. Storm heaven with your supplications fortified by your self-sacrifice, until God pours out his mercy and grace on your cherished land.

Be witness to Jesus Christ. Make it clear, that whatever may be true and good in other religions, finds its deeper meaning and perfect complement in Christ; while the Catholic faith reveals a knowledge of divine truth and a power to save, to sanctify and to unite man with God, which make it infinitely superior.

(Radio Message to Indian Catholics, 31/12/1952, *Catholic Documents*, XI, p. 17)

The Soul of a Nation expresses itself in its customs

Upon the mention of folklore, many people think at once of some survivals from ancient times, worthy, no doubt of being enacted on exceptional occasions, but without much interest for present-day life. That such an idea should be fairly wide spread, points to one of the rather regrettable consequences of the civilisation of this century.....

And it is here that folklore comes to its full value and significance. In a society that ignores its healthiest and most fertile traditions, folklore strives to make it maintain a living continuity with the past; not a continuity imposed by outside forces, but one resulting from the profound feelings of generations, which have found in folklore the expression of their special aspirations,

their beliefs, desires, and sorrows, their glorious memories of the past and their hopes for the future. The deepest resources of a people show themselves quite naturally in the whole of its usages, in its stories, legends, dramas and processions, where the splendour of the dresses and the originality of the different participating groups are a joy to the eye. Those who have kept a permanent contact with the hard demands of life, often have by instinct the artistic sense with which from very simple materials, then can produce magnificent masterpieces. On the occasion of such popular feasts, where a folklore of sterling value has the place that it deserves, everybody enjoys this common patrimony and enriches himself from it, more than he contributes to it.

But it must not be forgotten that in Christian countries, or in those which once were Christian, religious faith and the people's lives formed a unity comparable to the unity of soul and body. Today, where such a unity is lacking or where faith has become weak, can popular traditions, deprived of their vital principles, be maintained or renewed even artificially? In regions where such unity is still preserved folklore is not merely a curious survival from past ages; it is a manifestation of present-day life, which recognizes its debt to the past and attempts to maintain itself intelligently to new situations.

Thanks to the activity of folklore groups, precious customs are kept alive or are revived. We can therefore but praise those who with knowledge and devotedness, endeavour to help them, to direct their efforts, to stimulate their initiative, in short all those who directly collaborate with these groups. May you realize the full extent of the social role you are playing: to give back to men saturated with often falsified and mechanised means of entertainment, the taste for a recreation rich with the most authentic human values. This, no doubt, will demand of you a real and persevering effort, but is it not the means to delve deeper into the rich resources of your local and national traditions? You thus contribute to the growth and diffusion of the treasure gathered by those that went before you, you do it for the greater profit of your fellowmen. You keep alive the heart of your people by guarding it from cultural laziness, which is a sign of the decay of a social organism. At the same time you make yourselves more capable of appreciating the forms proper to other cultures, to guess the latter's deeper meaning, and to appreciate their own qualities.

Mutual esteem, which will be born from such an attitude will not fail to help powerfully, the efforts of those who try to bring about the union of nations through economic, social and political treaties and conventions.

(Address to the delegates of the International Folklore Festival 19/7/1953)

Adaptation combined with faithfulness to The Gospel

Lastly, there are some among you who would wish that your Church would be completely independent, not only as we have said, in regard to Government and finances, but also in regard to the teaching of Christian doctrine and sacred preaching, in which they try to claim 'autonomy'.

We do not at all deny that the manner of preaching and teaching ought to differ according to place and therefore ought to conform, when possible, to the nature and particular character of the Chinese people, as also to its ancient traditional customs. If this is properly done, certainly fruits will be gathered among you.

But — and it is absurd merely to think of it — by what right can men arbitrarily and diversely in different nations, interpret the Gospel of Jesus Christ?

(Encyclical Letter to the Chinese Hierarchy and Faithful, 7/10/1954, *The Pope Speaks*, 1 (1954), p. 400-401)

Love one's own culture while esteeming that of others

One generally distinguishes amongst civilised peoples diverse fields of culture in which each nation has its own way of thinking, judging, feeling and acting. We can thus distinguish a Latin cultural area, an Anglo-american area, a German area, a Slav area and so on, without speaking of the cultures of the great Asian peoples.

One ought not to think that these cultural areas originate from a desire to oppose oneself against other cultures, for this would lead to a dangerous isolation or at least to a regrettable impoverishment. They rather are the expression of the characteristics proper to every people, they are the results of the way in which these nations have developed their common heritage and have assi-

milated through culture contact, what came to them from outside. Every culture ought willingly to recognize the presence of other cultures and of those traits in which the other cultures are superior to itself. It ought not to hesitate to imitate them in this and willingly to receive from them whatever valuable elements they possess. In the mean time every culture continues to love and to foster those traits that are particular to itself, precisely because these traits are proper to it and in them it recognizes its distinctive mark.

(Address to the Latin Medical Union, 7/4/1955)

The Church does not identify itself with any particular culture

The Catholic Church is not identified with any one culture; her essence forbids it. She is ready, however, to enter into relations with all cultures. She recognizes and leaves to subsist whatever in those cultures is not opposed to nature. To each, however, she brings in addition the truth and the grace of Jesus Christ, and thus confers upon them a profound resemblance; it is by this very means that she makes the most effective contribution to bringing peace to the world.

(Address to the Congress of Historical Sciences, 7/9/1955, *The Pope Speaks*, 2 (1955), p. 213)

M. B.

(To be continued)

BOOK-REVIEWS

SWAMI PARAMA ARUBI ANANDAM (Fr. J. Monchanin), 1895-1957, A Memorial; distributed by Nirmala Art Publicities, Fort Station Road, Tiruchirapalli 2, South India; pp. 225; Rs. 2/50.

When in October 1957, the news reached India that Fr. J. Monchanin had died in France, his native country, many felt that in him the Church had lost one of its most outstanding intellectual and spiritual pioneers. He was indeed a worthy representative of that band of men who have laboured to bring about an harmonious integration between Christianity and the religious heritage of India. He but continued the tradition that had been started by a De Nobili and a Beschi, and had been handed down by a Brahmabandab Upadaya and a Johanss. Father Monchanin was spearheading the efforts of the Church to meet India, not in its social and educational needs, but in what it rightly cherishes as its richest treasure: its quest of the Absolute and its tradition of withdrawal from the world.

It was Swami Parama Arubi Anandam's conviction that Christianity would be able to speak to India on religion in a heart to heart talk, only if it ceased to appear as a religion originally imported from the West, and was presented as God's very answer to India's age long search for the Absolute. Only then would it be possible to integrate the two into a whole that is both genuinely Christian and genuinely Indian, only then would the Hindus be able to penetrate beyond the scales of outward appearances and taste the very kernel of Christ's message.

Some readers might wonder why this book, which seems to be strictly religious, should be reviewed at all in 'Social Action'. Fr. Monchanin himself gives the answer: "How to approach the educated Hindu? I confess the more I deal with Hindus, the less I see my way. I measure with anguish the gulf lying between them and us.... 'An Indian Benedictine Ashram' outlines one aspect (the main one?) of the needed approach. Efficient social work is another (cfr. the Poona Social Institute, an Indian parallel to the French 'Economie at Humanisme' badly needed). The intellectual aspect is very important too...." (p. 171). His approach, as the intellectual one, or the social approach of the Social Institute, represent but different aspects of that all-round

effort which the Church is making to establish a dialogue with India and all the facets of its culture. At present, many Hindus are apt to appreciate the social and educational contribution of the Church to the country's progress, more than her efforts to come to this confrontation on the religious plane. The various activities of the Church have their importance, but they all find their *raison d'être* in her spiritual mission to convey Christ's message to India in a language that is understood by its people. This too was Fr. Monchanin's life task.

Fr. Monchanin's Indian Benedictine Ashram, built on the banks of the Kavery will remind us that this spiritual approach must remain the most important one. More than ever the Faith is the greatest gift which the Church can give to a country that, in its desire for mere material values and economic progress runs the danger of loosing its soul and of denying its own spiritual heritage.

The present book is a collection gathered by Fr. Le Saux O.S.B., companion of Fr. Monchanin. It contains a bibliographical sketch of his life, some memories of his friends and extracts from the Swami's works. The book is abundantly illustrated and reads easily. Throughout the pages Fr. Monchanin's attractive personality shines forth: his austerity of life, his love for the poor and the simple, his keen intellect, his sympathetic and understanding approach to everything Indian, but also his efforts and his failures, the misunderstandings he had to endure and the absence of human success for all his efforts. All this cannot but leave a deep impression on an open minded reader, be he Christian or not. The future will show what fruits the Swami's work will bear. At present it is but like a seed that has fallen in the ground and has to die before it can bring forth new life. So was the work of Fr. Charles de Foucauld also, to whom Fr. Monchanin has been often compared, so was even the work of Christ Himself on the evening of Good Friday.

Fr. Monchanin has been called an ideal, and a symbol of things to come. He is a challenge for all those who wish well to India and her spiritual regeneration. It is through efforts like his that the Church will ultimately come into its own in India's culture, and that this country's religious heritage will find its completion in the Fulness of Christ.

M. V. d. B.

THE LAY APOSTOLATE IN INDIA, De Nobili Publications, D. N. C., Poona-6, pp. 88+viii — Price 90 nP.

The Lay Apostolate is a movement that has taken great prominence in the life of the Church, these last years. In India too, more and more attention is being paid to this subject. The Book, which is the Report of the study camp which the Theologians of De Nobili College organised on this topic in Bombay last year, is therefore very timely.

It has the qualities and defects of a report in which many persons have contributed. It gives in short chapters a systematic bird's-eye view of the whole question. To each chapter short bibliographical notes have been added, and at the end the book carries an extensive bibliography on the subject. This should prove a valuable help for any one who wants to read more on the subject. Each chapter is followed by some adapted quotations, by questions and the resolutions arrived at in the group discussions, which suggest how interesting these discussions must have been.

The work is not a book to be read through from cover to cover, it is something to be studied and discussed, only then will it reveal its true value as an instrument for discussion groups, study meetings or summer schools.

Nothing new has been said in the booklet, but now and then the chapters remain too theoretical. One would have liked to see them discuss the problem much more against the background of the situation in India. But the work has the merit of covering the whole field in a rather systematic way, albeit superficial and schematic at times.

On page 75 and following, one finds a questionnaire that can be used to make a parish inquiry regarding the lay organisations existing there. This again will be a welcome feature to those who want to acquire a systematic view of the life in a parish as manifested in its lay activities.

The booklet is the first of a series, the DE NOBILI SERIES. In the foreword there is a promise of similar books issuing, from the hands of the students of the De Nobili College. We can but welcome and wish good success to this new venture.

The book is strongly recommended to Seminarians, priests, nuns and Catholic lay leaders in colleges, parishes etc.

A. B.

INITIATION ECONOMIQUE ET SOCIALE, plans de travail à l'usage des militants, des étudiants, et des cercles d'études. Edited by G. Blardone, M. Chartier, J. Folliet, H. Vial. Chronique Sociale de France, 16, rue du Plat, Lyon-2 (France). 2 Vol. (352 pp.— 252pp.).

Those who want to acquire an initial understanding of the main socio-economic problems of our time, will find in this *Initiation* an extremely practical and sure guide. The work consists of a series of study plans, that leave ample scope for further development, yet at the same time are sufficiently readable and extensive so as to provide by themselves substantial reading on each topic. Both the choice of the questions that have been included and the way in which they are presented are based on the authors' own experience. The material they provide had first been taught and discussed in study-circles they themselves conducted for boys and girls of 18 to 25 years old. It must be added that, from the scientific point of view, their work is fully reliable. Three of the authors are university professors: Henri Vial is a theologian, Gilbert Blardone is an economist and Joseph Folliet is a sociologist and moralist. Michel Chartier is chaplain of a large number of study circles. They worked together, in close collaboration, on the preparation of the manuscript.

The first volume — *Faits of Situations* — opens with a discussion on the policy modern economics should adopt in the face of present-day world tensions. Economic activity, maintain the authors, should again be organized in view of its 'proper finality', i.e., to provide not the largest possible amount of financial profit, but the greatest possible output of goods that are necessary for the physical and spiritual development of men, on an international scale. This would lead us to what the call *one économie de besoins*, an economy centred on the real needs of men.

The eight subsequent chapters of this volume cover a wide range of topics which we can only mention here. Economic activity follows a certain pattern of organisation called the *economic system* (closed, capitalistic, socialistic, centralized economy etc.). Common to all present-day economic systems is the trend towards an elaborate degree of specialization and division of labour (*aspects of modern labour*). The basic cell of capitalistic economy is represented by the *enterprise* (definition, community-enterprise,

nationalization in France etc.). In the last chapter a brief account is given of the *economic development* in France (from 1750 to 1955), in USSR from (1917-1955) and in the USA (from 1850 to 1955). A chapter of particular interest since the matter included in it is not easily to be found elsewhere.

The second volume deals with the principles and ideas underlying economic activity. Of special interest is the chapter on the *social doctrine of the Catholic Church* and the chapter devoted to a critical analysis of the main *socio-economic theories* that have considerable influenced the trend of thought and events during this last century (liberalism, neo-liberalism, socialism, communism, marxism, social catholicism). The book closes with a series of pronouncements made by the Popes on the questions that have been dealt with.

To many in this country who are engaged in conducting social service classes for college students, this work should prove extremely valuable. An adapted English translation would dispense them from looking elsewhere for a text book to be placed in the hands of their students

J. B.

Social Survey

Orphanages Again

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall, M.P., who in 1956 had introduced a Bill in Parliament to control orphanages and had to give it up owing to nation-wide opposition, has come out with another Bill to provide for the supervision and control of orphanages, homes for neglected women or children and other like institutions and for matters connected therewith. This new Bill was introduced in the Rajya Sabha on May 8th, 1959.

In the statement of objects and reasons appended to the Bill the author says that the legislature has so far taken no steps to come to the rescue of the hundreds of orphanages and other charitable homes in the country whose pitiable conditions of existence needs attending to. He is of opinion that the Bills hitherto introduced, either in the State legislatures or in Parliament, have been of a negative character paying little attention to the constructive side. The present Bill seeks to set up a Board which will supervise and regularise the management of orphanages.

The Act is to be called the Orphanages and other Charitable Homes (Supervision and Control) Act, 1959. It is to extend to the whole of India except the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

Some definitions are given. "*Child*" means a boy or girl who has not completed the age of eighteen years; "*home*" means an institution whether called an orphanage, a home for neglected women or children, a widow's home, or by any other name, maintained or intended to be maintained for the reception, care, protection and welfare of women or children; and "*woman*" means a female who has completed the age of eighteen years.

Section 3 states that this Act shall not apply to (1) any hostel or boarding house attached to, or controlled or recognised by, an educational institution; or (2) any protective homes established under the Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Girls Act, 1956, or (3) any reformatory, certified or other school, or any home or workhouse, governed by any enactment for the time being in force.

The main provisions of the Bill are the setting up of a Board of Control, the recognition of institutions and their management.

(1) The State Government is to appoint a Board of Control for the control and supervision of homes in the State.

The members of the Board are to be appointed by the Government one of whom will be designated as Chairman. (S. 5).

The function of the Board is to (a) advise the State Government on matters concerning the recognition, maintenance and conduct of homes ;

(b) generally supervise and control all matters relating to the management of homes in accordance with the provisions of this Act ; and

(c) exercise such other powers and perform such other functions as may be prescribed by or under this Act.

The Board will have authority to issue orders to managers of homes, to enter at all reasonable times any home for the purpose of ascertaining whether the provisions of this Act or of any rules or orders made thereunder are being complied with or not, to require the production, for inspection, of any document, book, register or record kept therein and to ask for any information relating to the working of the home. (SS. 6, 8)

(2) Recognition. "After the commencement of this Act, no person shall maintain or conduct any home except under, and in accordance with, the conditions of a certificate of recognition granted under this Act (S. 12).

Any person who desires to maintain a home has to make an application to the appropriate authority for a certificate of recognition. The authority in question, after an inquiry, may or may not grant the certificate.

Existing institutions will have to obtain a certificate within three months.

The certificate will specify conditions and particulars as may be prescribed.

The recognising authority has also the power to revoke a certificate already granted if it is satisfied that the home is not being run as it should be. But before revoking the management will have to be given an opportunity to show cause.

When a certificate is revoked the home will have to shut down.

The management has also the option to close down a home but must give a six months' notice in writing.

(3) Management. Every home is to have a managing committee constituted as provided for by the constitution of each home.

The Board however has the right to modify or change the constitution, order the constitution or reconstitution of the Managing Committee according to directions given by it and, in general, control the managing committee.

The managing committee may discharge an inmate when it deems it necessary or expedient. But before discharging a female the Board has to be consulted.

The Act provides for penalties for non-compliance with the provisions of the Act and also for the making of rules by the State Governments.

This Bill is clearly less obnoxious than its predecessor and hence has a fair chance of being passed into law.

Dowry

When a private member's Bill which had sought to prohibit the taking and giving of dowry had been withdrawn at the request of the Government a spokesman of the Government had promised to introduce a Bill of its own for the same purpose. This Bill has now been introduced and is likely to come up for discussion in the monsoon session of Parliament.

The new law will be known as the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1959. It will extend to the whole of India except the State of Jammu and Kashmir. The date for enforcement will be left to the different States.

In this Act "*Dowry*" means "any property or valuable security given or agreed to be given to one party to a marriage or to any other person on behalf of such party by the other party to the marriage or by any other person on behalf of such other party either at the marriage or before or after the marriage, as consideration for the betrothal or marriage of the said parties, but does not include :

(1) dower or mahar in the case of persons to whom the Muslim Personal Law (*Shariat*) applies; or

(2) any present made at the time of the marriage to either party to the marriage in the form of ornaments, clothes and other articles not exceeding two thousand rupees in value in the aggregate. Section 3 lays down that "after the commencement of this Act any person who gives or takes or abets the giving or taking of dowry shall be punishable with imprisonment which may extend to six months or with fine which may extend to five thousand rupees, or with both".

The same penalty will be meted out to any person who after the commencement of this Act demands, directly or indirectly, from the parents or guardian of the bride or bridegroom, as the case may be, any dowry.

"Any agreement for the giving or taking of dowry shall be void."

Where in contravention of the provisions of this Act any dowry is received by any person other than the woman in connection with whose marriage it is given, that person must transfer it to the woman within one year from the date of marriage, or if the woman is a minor, within one year after she has attained the age of eighteen, and pending such transfer hold it in trust for the benefit of the woman. (s.6)

Failure to transfer will make the person liable to imprisonment which may extend to six months or fine which may extend to five thousand rupees or both.

Every offence under this Act will be non-recognisable, bailable and non-compoundable.

No court inferior to that of a magistrate of the First class may try any offence punishable under this Act and no court may take cognizance of any such offence except on a complaint made within one year from the date of offence.

With the commencement of this Act any Act on this matter enacted by a State legislature will stand repealed.

Employment

A Bill introduced by the union Labour Minister seeks to impose an obligation on employers in the public as well as private sector to notify all vacancies other than vacancies in unskilled categories,

vacancies of temporary duration and vacancies proposed to be filled through promotion, to the employment exchanges set up by the Government.

Refusal or neglect to notify the employment exchange or to furnish information demanded by Government is punishable with heavy fines.

This law, if enacted, while helping those who register their names at the employment exchanges will deprive the employer his right of employing a person of his choice.

Rats

The Directorate of Agriculture of the Government of Bihar has submitted to the Union Government, for approval, a scheme for the eradication of field rats at an estimated cost of Rs. 1.3 millions.

Twentyfive to thirty lakh maunds of foodgrains are eaten up by field rats, it is estimated.

If the money spent on family planning were spent on the eradication of such pests as monkeys, wild animals, rats and birds there would be plenty of food for all the humans now inhabiting the sub-continent, and, to spare.

Accidents

In 1957-58 there were 15,397 accidents on Indian railways as against 13,987 in the previous year. Out of these the greater number were of a minor nature. Only 4,027 were considered to be of some importance and out of these 2,747 accidents were inquired into and reports submitted to Government by the railway authorities. Of these 2,747 accidents 1,082 were due to the failure of the human element, 1,228 to technical defects and the remaining 437 to various miscellaneous causes.

The Government inspectors made inquiries concerning 18 major accidents which resulted in the death of 83 persons and in injuries to 569. Of the 18 accidents 12 were collisions between trains and three derailments. Two of the derailments were due to defective rolling stock.

The recent amendment to the Railway Act having received the assent of the President has come into force from May 2, 1959. It enhances considerably the penalty for travelling without tickets

or with defective tickets and for the misuse of the alarm chain apparatus. The amendment also bans unauthorised hawkers from trains and railway platforms and prohibits begging. It is now to be seen what measures the railway police will adopt to enforce the law and what co-operation they will get from the travelling public. A little better sense of civic responsibilities on the part of the travelling public would eradicate all these evils far more efficiently and quickly than legal enactments. (Soc. Action: March 1959, p. 143).

Workers to Pay

A very interesting and unique decision was given recently by arbitrators in an industrial dispute. Workmen of the Rohtas Industries Ltd., and the Ashoka Cement Ltd., of Dalmianagar had gone on strike mainly to press for payment of bonus while the dispute was before a labour tribunal for adjudication. The strike which began on September 3, 1957, was called off on October 3rd following an agreement between the President of the labour union and the Chairman of the Rohtas Industries. The matter was referred to two arbitrators, Mr. J. N. Majumdar and Mr. R. C. Mitter, two former High Court Judges and former members of the Labour Appellate Tribunal. The Arbitrators have held that the workmen are not entitled to wages and salaries for the strike period. They have also held that the management of the Rohtas Industries is entitled to compensation assessed at Rs. 6.90 lakhs and the management of the Ashoka Cement Ltd., Rs. 80,000 from their workmen who participated in the illegal strike.

This is probably the first case in which employees have been told that they have to pay compensation to their employers.

F. C. Rodrigues

Statement Issued to the Press

BY HIS EXCELLENCY RT. REV. DR. PETER BERNARD PEREIRA,
AUXILIARY-BISHOP OF TRIVANDRUM.

On Monday the 15th June 1959 there was Police firing in two Parishes of my Diocese and as a result, five persons died and several were wounded. I visited both the places and made exhaustive enquiries.

The first firing by the Police was at Pulluvila, a coastal village of the Neyyattinkara Taluq. A middle school and primary school of this village run by catholics did not open this day. There is a Departmental Primary school at one end of the village which also closed down soon after 10 A.M. because practically no students attended. There was no disturbance of any sort here. As could be seen by any one the school building and furniture are intact. I reliably learn that two local communists, Jacob and Thankappan, went to Neyyattinkara Police station and brought the Police in a special bus at about 12 A.M. and they were also with the Police in the bus. Seeing the Police a crowd gathered. Within a few minutes of the arrival of the Police, they started firing. Two persons died immediately. The Police took the bodies of these two and drove the bus while shooting from the bus on both sides of the road indiscriminately. A house in which a number of mourners were gathered was also fired at and the bullet mark can be clearly seen on the outer wall of the house. On account of this firing, in addition to the two who died, five persons were admitted to the hospital for treatment of bullet wounds and a few more whose wounds are not so serious are being treated privately.

The second firing was at Vettukad, a suburb of the Trivandrum city, at about 4 P.M. on the same day in front of St. Mary's High School, a catholic school which remained closed. A few men were guarding the school building. There was absolutely no necessity for the Police to come here. But a Police party headed by the Circle Inspector, Sri. Paramasivan Nair halted here. They first

took hold of a man named Zacharias who came out from a tea shop and belaboured him and threw him into the Police Van. A crowd gathered and the M.S.P., I am told, threw at the crowd stones which they had kept in the Van. Soon after, the Police shot at the crowd without any warning. Two persons died on the spot and one on the way to the hospital. Five persons were seriously wounded and admitted into the hospital.

It could be seen that the firing was on a pattern and was pre-planned in order to terrorise the catholics. The Police went to the villages concerned without any necessity and purposely created trouble and shot at the crowd. The story that the crowd was called up by ringing of church bells is utterly false and made up by the Police. If church bells are rung people gather in the church whereas the incidents took place at places sufficiently far away from the church. Hence after having made local enquiries I can safely deny this. Further I know that there was picketting and lathi charge and scuffle at 10 A.M. on the 15th inst. before the Kanjiramkulam High school two miles to the north of Pulluvila. Similarly there was picketting and lathi charge at Madhavapuram, a place 3 miles north of Vettukad the same day at 10 A.M. If at all, by some stretch of imagination it could be held that shooting was necessary, it could have been in these places. But these were not catholic centres and the Kerala Communist Government wanted only catholics to be shot down. It can be seen that the three places where shooting took place till now are catholic centres.

I would like to add that the Catholic Bishops are concerned only with education and the school question. They have nothing to do with the driving out of Communist Government of Kerala. This is a political matter which concerns the general public and the political parties of the State. The 'deliverance struggle' as it is called is a matter between the Government and the political parties. But the attempt of the Kerala Government is to show that only catholics are opposing them and hence this selective shooting. But again I wish to emphasise that the Bishops as such have nothing to do with the deliverance struggle.

(Sd.)

Trivandrum,
17-6-1959.

Auxiliary-bishop of Trivandrum.

The Kerala Christian Bishops' Education Committee has issued the following statement after interviewing the Prime Minister at Trivandrum. This Committee represents the Bishops of all the Christian denominations in Kerala.

The Bishops who met the Prime Minister were :—

1. Mathew Kavukatt,
Catholic Archbishop of Changanacherry.
2. Abram Mar Clemis,
Jacobite Malankara Metropolitan.
3. Benedict Mar Gregoriose,
Catholic Archbishop of Trivandrum.
4. Mathews Mar Ivaniose,
Jacobite Bishop, Kottayam.
5. Jerome Fernandez,
Catholic Bishop of Quilon.
6. Philippose Mar Chrysostom,
Mar Thomite Bishop of Northern Diocese.
7. M. M. John,
C. S. I. Bishop, Kottayam.

On behalf on the Committee the Archbishop of Changanacherry presented to the Prime Minister a Memorandum. The gist of the Memorandum was to the effect that the Bishops of the several Christian denominations in Kerala share the anxiety with others regarding the present serious situation in Kerala. It was also stated that they were deeply aggrieved by the attempt of the Kerala Government to wean away the youth of the State from religion and culture by a process of indoctrination through Text Books and other totalitarian measures destroying individual liberty and freedom of thought. The present agitation against the Government, the Bishops said, was a mass upsurge in which every section of the population and all democratic parties

are taking part. The Bishops pointed out some of the more serious charges levelled against the present Government by the people. They specially mentioned in the Memorandum about the shooting down of innocent people. The Bishop's representing they are the various denominations, made it perfectly clear to the Prime Minister that the propaganda made by the Kerala Government that the present agitation is sponsored by the catholics alone is entirely unfounded and deliberately mischievous. They stressed that as citizens of India they are profoundly interested in the welfare of the State and the reestablishment of democracy in Kerala.

The Prime Minister went through the Memorandum and asked for clarifications on certain points especially on the present educational issue in the State. Necessary clarifications were given.

The interview lasted for about 45 minutes. The conversation was very cordial and the Prime Minister expressed his thanks to the Bishops for meeting him on his invitation and the Bishops in turn expressed their gratitude to the Prime Minister for giving them an opportunity for a frank discussion with him.

Governor's Statement Improper Panampilly Refutes Governor's Statement and Challenges Government.

Ernakulam, June 16 — Sri Panampilly Govinda Menon, former Chief Minister of Travancore-Cochin has sent the following letter to Dr. Ramakrishna Rao, Governor of Kerala :

Dear Friend,

The report of a statement given by you to the PTI which I read in the Hindu dated June, 15, impelled me to write this letter. You have said therein : "In view of the incidents at Ankamali I owe it to myself both in my capacity as Constitution Head of the State and in my capacity as a peace loving citizen to appeal to all concerned, especially to those who are sponsoring the agitation, to see that the name of their respective organisations is not tarnished with the stigma of involvement in any acts of violence and destruction of life and property".

Being an old political colleague and friend, I have the highest regard for you. Being the Constitutional Head of my State I have great respect for you. But I am constrained to tell you that your statement has been improper in that you made it without ascertaining the facts. You have allowed yourself to be drawn into political controversies by making the aforesaid statement and it has become my duty in the interests of the people and the cause which I represent to publicly challenge the incorrect assumptions on which your statement is based. The Head of State under our Constitution is not the representative or spokesman of the political party which for the time being runs the administration. The oath you have taken before entering upon your office is that you would "preserve, protect and defend the Constitution and the law and that you would devote yourself to the service of the people of Kerala." It is regrettable that in making the statement referred to, you easily became a prey to the false propaganda fabricated by interested parties and gave the stamp of the "Constitutional Head of the State" to the same.

Your statement assumes that there was an attack on the Ankamali Police Station by the people and that was the justification for the police firing several rounds against the people resulting in loss of life to at least seven citizens by the time I write this letter and serious injuries to several others. No such attack took place there: and I ask you what evidence you have in your possession about this, apart perhaps from what your Chief Minister would have reported to you.

The citizens of Ankamali and the tens of thousands of people who thronged to the place by noon on the 14th, hearing about the tragedy enacted there on the previous night, know that the story of the attack against the police station is a false and cooked up one. I am sure you would have seen the photo of the building taken by the photographer of the Malayala Manorama of Kottayam on the 14th June and published in the issue of that newspaper dated June 15. The police station building remains there without even a scratch to the mortar on its walls. Many friends and myself saw the station on the 14th. We are all convinced after a visit to the spot that the story of the attack against the police station is an absolute falsehood.

I challenge your Government to prove by an enquiry by a High Court Judge that there was any attack against the police or the Police station justifying the firing. Your Chief Minister has already stated that there would be no enquiry. You however owe it to yourself and to the people of Kerala whom you serve, to proceed to Ankamali at once and correct the impression you have been led to form about the incidents there. It is also your duty to see that an enquiry by a High Court Judge is immediately ordered. If you are powerless to do this, as perhaps you are, you should not have endorsed the mendacious propaganda stuff supplied to you by your Chief Minister and his Colleagues whose hands today are steeped in the blood of the innocent citizens of the State.

Now that you have made the statement and caused deep grievance and pain to the large sections of the people of the State by taking up, unconsciously perhaps, a wholly partisan attitude about the Ankamali firing, may I bring to your notice for enquiry certain aspects connected with this carnage at Ankamali.

(1) The toddy shops in the Taluk are all run by a Tapper's Co-operative, to which they were entrusted by your Government

at extremely favourable rates much to the detriment of the public revenue. This Co-operative is virtually a wing of the Communist Party and it is to enable the party and its men to amass money that the shops were given to the co-operative without public auction against long standing practice and in violation of the law. For the last many weeks a peaceful anti drink movement was going on in the Taluk which affected the sales in the shops very considerably. The Communists have been smarting under this development.

(2) On the 13th June, there was as usual peaceful picketing in the toddy shops round about Ankamali. A young Volunteer by name Poulouse was arrested by the Police from in front of the Mattur toddy shop situated about 3 miles from Ankamali. This was at about 6 p.m. He was beaten up by the Police in the road where he was arrested and in the Van in which he was taken to the Station. Sri M. A. Antony, M.L.A., elected from Ankamali area, went to the Police station and requested the Police to enlarge the prisoner on bail. This request was refused.

(3) A few people who had assembled in the Ankamali Bazar formed themselves into a public meeting and Sri Antony addressed the meeting and protested against the arrest.

(4) The firing took place and the dead bodies fell at about the place where the people held the meeting. This spot is about 100 to 150 yards to the south of the Police Station and this fact itself completely belied the story that the people were fired at when they attack the Police station. People seem to have been shot some in the back.

(5) Three or four hours before the firing the strengths of the armed police force was considerably reinforced indicating preparation for a determined action long before the alleged provocation from the people arose.

(6) The electric lights in the streets of Ankamali went out at time of the firing. This cannot be an accident.

(7) No warning was administered before the firing.

(8) The telephone system in Ankamali ceased to operate in the night on the 13th. Communication was thus cut off. Roads to Ankamali were blocked. Having thus raised a thick curtain around Ankamali, wireless message was sent by the Police at

Ankamali to Trivandrum. (One hundred and sixty miles away) that the Police station was attacked and firing had therefore to be resorted to. This story appears to have been transmitted to the P T I representative Trivandrum and the first P T I message emanated from Trivandrum accordingly.

If you could order a judicial enquiry by a High Court Judge the true facts will come out. It will then be known that what happened in Ankamali was a massacre resembling in many respects the notorious Jallian-wallah killing.

The people of the State are up against the Communist Party and their leaders who run the administration as your Ministers. They are trying to caricature the movement as a Catholic Movement, an agitation by the Church authorities. You seem to have accepted this thesis. I have not been able to see any section of the people apart from the Communists who are against the present agitation. It is idle to characterise the movement as a Communal one. As I understand it a Communal agitation is one directed by certain communities against certain other communities. There is no such situation in Kerala today. All people except the Communists want the Ministry to go out of office on the ground among others that they have outlived their mandate and have forfeited all moral rights to rule over the State.

The people of Kerala are in deep distress. You may not be in a position to help them. But may I request you at least not to harm them by tarnishing them with the stigma of involvement in acts of violence when as a matter of fact the stigma really is borne by none other than your Ministers?

With respectful regards,

Yours sincerely,

PANAMPILLY GOVINDA MENON.

